(c) the taxes being charged by the Central Government and State Government on the medicines in the country during the year 2005-06 along with the rates thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) In general, drugs/medicines attract customs duty @ 15% (peak rate of customs duty) and central excise duty @ 16%. However, some full/partial exemptions/concessions from customs and central excise duties on specified drugs and medicines are presently in force.

Sales Tax is a State subject. Different States practice different; levy of sales tax. Uniformity has been achieved for those States where value Added Tax (VAT), under which a uniform rate of 4% has been implemented. However, all the States have not implemented VAT and therefore, uniformity between various States is yet to be achieved. Apart from VAT/sales tax, States also levy local taxes such as Octroi etc.

Adulteration in Oils

2077. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to implement Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order 1998, effectively;

(b) the number of cases of adulterated oils reported; and

(c) the number of such cases during the years from 2002-03 to 2004-05, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Some of the State Government/UT Administrations which have not implemented the Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998 or have granted exemptions/extensions for varying period of time deferring the implementation of the Order have been reiterated the need to implement the Order in letter and spirit.

(b) and (c) State-wise, number of cases of adulteration reported for the latest years 2002 and 2003 is enclosed as per Statement.

Statement I

State-wise Number of cases of adulteration reported in the year 2002-2003

Sl. No.	State	2002	2003
1.	Andhra Pradesh	134	165
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	02	Nil
3.	Assam	07	N.A.
4.	Bihar	N.A.	N.A.
5.	Goa	Nil	Nil
6.	Gujarat	N.A.	N.A.
7.	Haryana	26	39
8.	Himachal Pradesh	05	18
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	03	04
10.	Karnataka	30	41
11.	Kerala	11	59
12.	Madhya Pradesh	20	N.A.
13.	Maharashtra	474	547
14.	Manipur	02	N.A.
15.	Meghalaya	Nil	Nil
16.	Mizoram	Nil	N.A.
17.	Nagaland	Nil	01
18.	Orissa	25	N.A.
19.	Punjab	32	23
20.	Rajasthan	70	100
21.	Sikkim	Nil	Nil
22.	Tamil Nadu	41	N.A.
23.	Tripura	Nil	Nil
24.	Uttar Pradesh	198	289
25.	West Bengal	33	16
26.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Nil	N.A.
27.	Chandigarh	04	N.A.
28.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Nil	N.A.
29.	Daman & Diu	02	Nil
30.	Delhi	26	32
31.	Lakshadweep	Nil	N.A.
32.	Pondicherry	Nil	05

SI. No.	State	2002	2003
33.	Chhattisgarh	08	11
34.	Jharkhand	Nil	04
35.	Uttaranchal	02	02
	TOTAL:	1255	1356

Starvation deaths

2078. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been seized of the direction issued in early June, 2005, by the Supreme Court of India to the West Bengal State Human Rights Commission to verify reports of wide spread starvation deaths among people in several villages in Murshidabad district of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the actions taken, if any, for ensuring availability of adequate nutritious food to the surviving people living below the poverty level in the district in order to avoid further deaths due to starvation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The Government of West Bengal has reported that inssuance of the such directions by the Supreme Court of India have not come to their notice, nor they have received any reference from West Bengal State Human Rights Commission in this regard. Moreover, no starvation death has been reported by the State Government.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) To ensure food security to the people living below poverty line, a quantity of 15.88 lakh MT of rice, 45.12 lakh MT of wheat under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and 6.20 lakh MT of rice and 0.42 lakh MT of wheat under various food based welfare schemes was allocated to State Government of West Bengal during the year